SILK ON THE FARM.

Agricultural Authorities Convinced That It Can Be Raised with Profit.

Although the United States agricultural department has made several well advertised attempts to start silk growing on an extended scale in this country, none of the experiments has proven successful. Now the government experts have started on a new tack that may meet with better results. Dr. L. O. Howard, the entomologist of the agricultural department, always has believed it possible to produce here all the raw silk needed by American manufacturers. In order to stimulate the industry he has advertised that the department would purchase at the current European price all the cocoons offered for sale, states the New York Herald.

Dr. Howard is convinced that silk raising, to be profitable in this country, must be pursued by many families and on a small scale—as a sort of "side line," as it were, to other agricultural undertakings. He estimates that from 20 to 30 pounds of cocoons could be raised on a small farm, and the work could be done entirely by the women and children. As the profit on even this small output would range from $30 to $35 the addition to the household income is not to be despised by the small farmer.

While on a trip to Europe last summer Dr. Howard visited the silk-raising countries and found the industry highly profitable, even on the large estates. The work was performed largely by the women and children, while the men toiled at harder tasks. A child is said to become useful at the age of five years, and large families therefore do not necessarily mean poverty. Upon his return Dr. Howard recommended the purchase of a four-basin silk reel with which to reel the silk from the cocoons purchased by the department. The raw silk sold in the open market, he contended, would help defray the expenses. Two reels of this size were imported from France. One was set up in a building in the department grounds in Washington, where it is in full operation, while the other was sent to Tulullah Falls, Ga., where a northern capitalist has established a silk farm of 3,000 acres, with the purpose of establishing a colony for the raising of silk.

Two women were brought from France to operate the machine in the department building, and their work is one of the most interesting sights in the capital at present. It was only after the utmost persuasion that they were induced to leave their native land. It is hoped, however, that American girls may be able to learn much from them. The good offices of the immigration bureau will be enlisted to induce a colony of Italian silk growers and reelers to come to this country and settle in California.

NATION'S BIGGEST BUSINESS.

More Than 745,000,000 Pounds of Mail Delivered by Uncle Sam Last Year.

I asked Postmaster General Payne how in his opinion the United States post office compares in efficiency with private business organizations and foreign post offices, writes M. G. Cunniff, in the November World's Work.

"How do I know?" said he; "I've been postmaster general only a year."

An assistant postmaster general was once invited to address a convention of postmasters, runs an old story. He jokingly replied:

"I cannot go. I couldn't tell you anything anyway. What do I know about the postal business?"

Said another assistant postmaster general:

"If a man attends closely to his work he can learn to manage one of these departments in about 40 years. Then he goes out and another pupil comes in—the chances are a politician. A business? Why it is simply a training school!"

Through 75,924 post offices, and in such mass as to require for railroad transportation 31 trains each a mile long traveling 203 times around the equator, more than 745,000,000 pounds of mail matter was delivered last year. If an average were made, every man, woman and child in the United States received 61 letters, 31 newspapers or periodicals, and 14 packages; and every sixth person registered a letter.

The people of the United States paid $130,000,000 in postage for its postal service last year. Over $4,000,000 was paid to support the post office.

Play Stages in Child Life.

Dr. Hutchinson divides the child's life into six play-stages, corresponding to primitive civilization, which he calls the "root-and-grub, the hunting, the pastoral, the agricultural and the commercial." The root-and-grub stage is the first when the infant chiefly shows its interest in life by clutching at bright objects. A little later, the rolling spool or ball attracts him exactly as it attracts the kitten. From this he passes into the hunting stage, where he hides himself, jumps out at people from behind doors, and peoples his environment with imaginary wild beast. Last, he emerges into the commercial stage, when he trades in marbles and fills his pockets with schoolboy merchandise. "In short, the school of play, in 15 short years, has brought him from the root-digging cave man to the 'bear' of the stock exchange, the modern captain of industry."

Typographical Error.

"Gee whiz!" exclaimed the reporter, looking over his report of the wedding in the paper, "I'll bet that bridegroom will be sore."

"What's the matter?" asked the snake editor.

"He owns an old family homestead out in the suburbs somewhere, I believe, and he told me to say 'the young couple will reside at the old manse.' The papers got it 'old man's."
—Philadelphia Record.

THE BOLTING HABIT.

Hasty Eating Has Much to Do with the Prevalence of Indigestion in This Country.

We live not upon what we eat, but upon what we digest.

The history of human troubles began with food. Eve, eating of the fruit of the tree, found it good. Adam ate and punishment followed. Now, even as then, temptation begins with the palate, that janitor of the stomach who may not be offended with impunity. Hunger is the compelling force, and the sense of taste was supposedly given as a guide to appetite, but where gratification of the palate becomes the object and the nutrition of the body a minor consideration, trouble usually ensues, says the New York Herald.

In the first place gratification too often tends to excess, either in the amount or variety of foods eaten. Were the choice of dishes limited or their preparation more simple, the many troubles arising from the various forms of indigestion would probably be less. Take the question of meat.

The various forms of fish, flesh and fowl are in general agreeable to the palate and gratifying to the stomach. Moreover, no food materials lend themselves more readily to the cook's skill than these. It follows that excess in this special line becomes not only easy but habitual, and the results are sometimes serious. Under normal, healthy conditions meat is ordinarily termed digestible, but it is probably eaten in too great quantities by many people, particularly those who lead more or less indolent or sedentary lives. It is quite safe to say that many of the prevailing (or fashionable) diseases of the day are at least linked with an excess of albuminous waste in the system.

The question of digestibility of foods is a complex one, depending upon so many modifying circumstances no one may dare lay down didactic rules in general. The digestibility, therefore the nutritive power, of meats is affected by the age of the animals when killed, as well as by their previous care and feeding. In general the hard and long fibered meat is less digestible than the softer, short fibered. Beef and mutton are considered more digestible than pork and veal, yet beef is a long-fibered meat, and pork is a tender fibered, but less digestibly because of the large amount of fat present.

Should a table of the comparative digestibilities of various meats be shown it would be misleading. Lamb properly cooked might be more digestible than the more esteemed mutton improperly prepared. Personal idiosyncrasies, the particular condition of the digestive organs, the age and occupation of the person are modifying circumstances in the digestibility of a particular food.

The habit of hasty eating probably has as much to do with the prevailing American indigestion as any other one thing. The process of digestion, especially of the carbohydrates, begins in the mouth, and when food is unceremoniously bolted, as it often is, even when one is not trying to catch a train, it cannot be properly digested. The things which are the easiest to swallow hastily are the ones necessary to retain in the mouth sufficiently long to insure proper mixing with the digestive juice of the saliva. Cereals, potatoes, bread, all starchy foods considered digestible in general, are certainly not that to the person who eats them improperly. No class of foods needs more careful preparation than those containing starch, and probably no foods are more abused in this particular.

Taste and Food Needs.

That taste is a reliable guide to our food needs is the theory of P. T. Borissow, a Russian physician. Such curiosities of taste as the craving for chalk, coal, acids, etc., result from real necessities, and children often eat earth, wall plaster and the like at an age when the growth of the bones is most energetic and an extra supply of mineral matter is demanded. The strong appetite of children for sweets and farinaceous foods is explained by the requirement of carbohydrates during work and the production of animal heat. To verify his theory, the author experimented on chickens, and found that roosters, which lay no eggs, have less craving for mineral substances than hens, and are indifferent to plaster, egg-shell and small stones. The lime foods, moreover, are sought by the hen periodically during her laying season.

To Break Up Insomnia.

An alcohol rub at bedtime will go far toward breaking up insomnia. Let the rubber begin with the forehead and temples of the sleepless one, paying particular attention to the spine and back of the neck. Rub the alcohol gently but firmly into the body, working gradually down to the feet, and probably the patient will fall asleep before the rubbing is completed. One night or even one week of rubbing would not be likely to bring back permanent habits of sound, healthy slumber, but each night there is a gain toward the normal equilibrium of the nerves, and a month of alcohol rubs should put one in a position to do without external helps of any kind.

Delicate Indian Pudding.

One quart milk; when boiling sprinkle in two or three tablespoons Indian meal, then add butter size of a nut. Beat three eggs and add to them one-half cup molasses, one-half teaspoon ginger and salt. Add to the milk and bake one-half to one hour.—Boston Globe.

Sweet Buns.

One cupful bread sponge, one cupful sugar, two [illegible] cupful shortening mix, let rise [illegible] a few currants and mold out into buns. Let rise, and bake.
—Farm and Home.

PROTECTION OF MAIL CLERKS.

The Coaches in Which They Work Are Too Fragile for Safety.

It is asserted, and proof of the truth of the assertion is not wanting, that measures for the protection of railway mail clerks from injury by collision and other forms of railway disaster have not kept pace with measures with which the great railroad systems have in recent years been busy for the protection of other classes of travelers. For example, says the Portland Oregonian, engines have increased in weight and strength of construction, and vestibule cars have been built that are almost proof against telescoping, whereas such changes as have been made in the mail car render it more likely than ever to be crushed between the heavy masses before and behind it in case of collision. In ghastly proof of this neglect is the large percentage of mail clerks who are killed or injured in the service. Congress will be asked to look into the matter and enact a law compelling railroad companies to extend improvement in car building to the mail cars that are a part—and a very material part—of their rolling stock.

Car building has become a science, the details of which are worked out carefully in the interest of the safety and comfort of the traveling public. The solidity and strength of the sleeping car are regarded as guarantees of safety for which many people pay the additional fee required for occupying them. A review of railway accidents for the year shows that a very small percentage of those who suffered from them were occupants of sleepers or chair cars, the principal reason being that these cars were heavy enough and strong enough to resist shocks that wrecked the ordinary passenger coaches and reduced to splinters the mail, express and baggage cars.

The modern engine is a machine of wonderful power and endurance; the vestibule system makes a compact and solid train, the resistant power of which reduces very largely the danger to passengers in case of wreck. Between these two extremes, drawn by the one and pushed, in case of sudden stoppage, by the other, are the mail, express and baggage cars that are constructed on lines that have followed the road for years, showing almost no improvement. It follows that the workers on these cars are engaged in vocations of extraordinary hazard, and the government, in behalf of its faithful servitors, the railway mail clerks, will be asked and urged to pass a law requiring mail cars to be more substantially constructed.

A REMARKABLE VILLAGE.

Japanese Community with Strange System and Strict Sumptuary Law.

Baron Kodama, the Japanese minister of the interior, recently made a visit of inspection to a remarkable village in the Samby district of Chiba-Ken. The minister's curiosity had been aroused by reports regarding the communal system in the village, and he went there to see for himself how the system worked, says the Philadelphia Ledger.

The name of the village is Minamoto. It contains about 300 families, the total number of inhabitants being 1,600. It is to one man—the ex-headsman, Namiki—that the credit of having brought the community to its present condition is almost wholly due. Namiki resigned his post last March after having directed the village affairs for nine years.

In educational matters Minamoto is ahead of even the most advanced of the Japanese cities. Every one of the 125 boys who have reached school age is attending school. Of the 102 girls 88 attend school, while of the 14 others most are only residing temporarily in the community. The school has a permanent fund, amounting to about 12,000 yen ($6,000), which yields an income more than sufficient to pay the whole school expenses, although not a cent is asked in the way of fees for the children.

This system of financing the village education is to be extended to other public affairs, and beginning this year the village office has begun the work of creating another permanent fund of 10,000 yen, the interest of which is to be used to meet all the rates and taxes the villagers have to pay. When this fund is complete the villagers will be practically exempt from the payment of any public taxes.

To occidental eyes the most remarkable feature of the community is the sumptuary law, which is strictly enforced. No silk garment is tolerated, and the giving of banquets on the enrollment or disbandment of conscripts, customary throughout Japan, is discouraged. No pains are spared to inculcate habits of thrift and diligence among the villagers.

The members of the community are all zealous Buddhists.

For Crippled Pupils.

Londoners are becoming accustomed to the sight of the comfortable carriages which convey crippled children between their homes and the schools, which, thanks largely to the energy of Mrs. Humphrey Ward, now form part of the educational system of the London school board.

Versatility.

Towne—I could scarcely refrain from laughing at Dumley's fiancee when she remarked that he was "so versatile."

Browne—Well, he is rather versatile.

"What? He's a regular idiot."

"Yes, but he's so many different kinds of idiot."—Philadelphia Press.

Didn't Hit Him.

"You know, they say money talks," suggested the woman with the subscription paper, cheerfully.

"Well, I never was any hand for extravagant speeches," replied the close-fisted millionaire.—Syracuse Herald.

BIG GAME IN A HOTEL.

Guests in Singapore Hostelry Are Startled by Strange Additions to Their Number.

Singapore is possibly the most humid place on earth. The atmosphere is almost always "sticky" from the combination of heat and rain. Animals and reptiles of all kinds abound in the Malay peninsula, as they do in India and other tropical countries. At Singapore Raffles' hotel is the gathering place at night of all the foreign residents looking for a chance friend from home on one of the many incoming steamers, says a London exchange. Wide piazzas run the entire length of the house on each floor and overlook pretty flower gardens and well kept grounds. One day in the early part of last winter one can imagine the amazement of the assembled patrons on beholding a huge python serenely crawling about the lower piazza of the hotel.

This reptile, which measures about 12 feet in length and was as large in body as a man's arm, is now on exhibition in the small "zoo" connected with the botannical gardens in Singapore. It quite gives one the "shivers" to think that one might have been waked up some morning and found this formidable foe in one's bedroom.

Shortly after the advent of the python players in the billiard room one evening were startled to see a young tiger moving quietly about the room. There was a shriek and a sudden disappearance of billiard players, but eventually the beast was captured. Whether it came from its native jungle or escaped from some native who had it in captivity—they frequently do have them as pets—was never known, but his tigership was also sent to swell the collection at the "zoo."

The permanent residents of Raffles' hotel after these two experiences had grown rather accustomed to strange things prowling about, but were still unprepared for the next encounter, which took place in February. The huge native servant who stands guard at the door was startled, not to say alarmed, one day by a sudden and violent contact with some animal rushing between his legs. It turned out to be a wild boar, strayed in from no one knows where.

NO FREE COPIES.

"The Hustler" Was Ready to Do Business on the Spot, But for Spot Cash Only.

"I never read of a case on newspaper enterprise without it bringing up a recollection of 30 years ago," said a city hall official, as he laid aside his newspaper to stroke his gray locks, relates the Brooklyn Citizen. "I was then a miner and prospector, and we had camped at the mouth of a pass in the Bitter Root mountains, on the dividing line between Idaho and Montana, and for 40 days we had not seen a human being outside of our own crowd. At five o'clock in the afternoon two men in charge of three pack mules reached our camp, and as they halted one of the men said:

"Good afternoon, gentlemen. Will you be kind enough to inform me if there is any town around here?"

"Town? Town?" repeated the captain. "Why, man, do you know where you are?"

"In the Bitter Root, I take it."

"Yes, and you are looking for a town? Well, the nearest town I know of, if you keep to the west, is about 400 miles from here."

"Only 400? Well, that's not so bad. Can we camp here to-night?"

"Of course. What are you loaded with?"

"Well, it was the Montana Weekly Herald ten days ago. In another ten it may be the Idaho Hustler. We've got press and type and everything necessary to get out a lively sheet. Jim, better get the pack off. I've got to write a salutory and leading editorial to-night. Westward the Star of the Empire, and so forth. The office of the Hustler is now open for business. Subscriptions, four dollars per year; always payable in advance. Two dollars for six months. Job work done on reasonable terms. All advertising considered cash, unless otherwise agreed, and no specimen copies forwarded unless paid for."

Peculiar Hobby.

Perhaps no monarch has a more curious hobby than the shah of Persia, who is a veritable enthusiast at cat collecting. He has a specimen of every kind of cat of every country—cats of all sizes, all colors and all shapes. There are many scores of them, and some of the best specimens are always taken with the Persian ruler on his travels. If ever his majesty sees a kind of cat which he does not possess—a very rare occurrence—he gives orders for it to be bought for him at once, even if the price be a thousand pounds. There are special and highly remunerated attendants to look after these favored felines.

Tokio's Rapid Growth.

According to statistics collected by the police at the close of last year, Tokio has now a total population of 1,839,788 persons, living in 392,039 houses. Tokio is growing enormously. Ten years ago the official returns gave the city a total population of 1,409,869, so that its increase in a decade has been no less than 429,921. It is now as populous and flourishing a city as it was in the flourishing period of Tokugawa rule, and year by year its suburbs are extending, a process which will certainly be accelerated by the laying of electric railways.

Coal from Japan.

The coal production of Japan was almost trebled during the years from 1892 to 1901, and the amount exported a little more than double in the same time, while the extension of steamship and railway lines and growing number of factories caused the domestic consumption to be almost quadrupled.

Notice to Stockholders

There will be a meeting of the stockholders of the Paris Electric Light Co., at their office, on Saturday, January 9, 1904, for the election of directors for the ensuing year.

R. P. DOW, President.

Notice to Stockholders.

There will be a meeting of the stockholders of the Agricultural Bank at the office of said bank, on January 4th, 1904, for the election of directors for the ensuing year.

JOHN J. McCLINTOCK, Cashier.
HENRY SPEARS, President.

Notice To Stockholders.

There will be a meeting of the stockholders of the [illegible] Bank at the office of said bank, on January 4th, 1904, for the election of directors for the ensuing year.

E. F. CLAY, President.
[illegible] WOODFORD, Cashier.